

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THESSA 00163 221059Z
ACTION SCS-06

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-----018778 221103Z /13

O 221010Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2940
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

UNCLAS THESSALONIKI 0163

E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: CASC, EAID, GR
SUBJECT: W/W STATUS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THESSALONIKI

REF: STATE 158119 AND PREVIOUS

1. NOMARCH HAS INFORMED CONGEN THAT NO RPT NO AMERICANS HAVE BEEN KILLED OR INJURED IN THESSALONIKI'S RECENT EARTHQUAKE. OF THE 20 KNOWN DEAD ONLY ONE WAS NON-GREEK, A YUGOSLAV. DESPITE CONGEN'S EFFORTS TO CONTACT KNOWN AMERICANS IN NEARBY VICINITY, IT APPEARS THAT MOST OF THEM HAVE FLED IN THE MASS EXODUS TO HALKIDIKI AND SOUTHERN GREECE EARLY MORNINGS OF JUNE 21. THESSALONIKI, A CITY OF APARTMENT DWELLERS, IS NOW A CITY OF ABANDONED APARTMENT BUILDINGS.

2. TELEPHONE EXCHANGES IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE CITY ARE NOT FUNCTIONING. FOR INSTANCE, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PHONE PANORAMA, A SUBURB THAT HAD MANY AMERICAN CITIZENS. UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, WHICH HAD NUMBER OF AMERICAN STUDENTS, IS NOW CLOSED INDEFINITELY. BECAUSE OF THE SERIES OF TREMORS THAT HAVE CONTINUED TO ROCK THIS AREA SINCE MAY 24 IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT MANY
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PAGE 02 THESSA 00163 221059Z

AMERICAN TOURISTS, RETIREES, BUSINESSMEN AND STUDENTS WILL REMAIN OR RETURN HERE UNTIL A PROPER SEISMOLOGICAL EVALUATION CAN BE MADE. AMCONSULATE ALONG WITH OTHER CONSULATES ARE ENCOURAGING INQUIRERS THAT IF THEY FEEL UNSAFE THEY SHOULD LEAVE AREA. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IS STILL OPERATING ON SCHEDULE.

3. CONGEN IS WORKING WITH SKELETON STAFF BECAUSE NUMBER OF POCAL EMPLOYEES HAVE FLED CITY WITH THEIR FAMILIES. CONGEN BUILDING MAY HAVE SUFFERED STRUCTURAL DAMAGE, AND IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO MOVE OUR OFFICES AND HOMES ELSEWHERE. LAST NIGHT AMERICAN STAFF SLEPT AT AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL.

4. CONGEN HAS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THERE ARE ANY AMERICAN VICTIMS AMONG THE 20 KNOWN DEAD AND 20 SERIOUSLY INJURED. CONGEN IS CONTINUING ATTEMPTS TO REACH AMERICANS LISTED IN REFTEL THROUGH TELEPHONE CALLS AND TRAVEL BY CAR IN METROPOLITAN AREA.

5. CONGEN WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT AND AMEMBASSY ATHENS INFORMED OF THOSE AMERICANS REQUIRING ASSISTANCE.
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